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SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION 98
By Ramsey

A RESOLUTION to commemorate the Thirty-Fifth Anniversary of the opening of Rocky Mount Museum as a state historic site on April 1, 1962.

WHEREAS, it is fitting that the members of this General Assembly should recognize and celebrate significant events in the history of our great nation and state, along with the achievements of groups which preserve this common heritage; and

WHEREAS, on April 2, 1790, the United States Congress officially accepted the land from North Carolina for the Territory of the United States South of the River Ohio, the area which would later become Tennessee; and

WHEREAS, built around 1770 by an early settler named William Cobb, Rocky Mount served as the Original Southwest Territorial Capitol from 1790 to 1792 during Governor William Blount's residence with the Cobb family; and

WHEREAS, Cobb's daughter, Penelope C. Massengill, later acquired Rocky Mount, and the house was inhabited and preserved by her descendants until the State of Tennessee acquired it in 1959; and

WHEREAS, the Rocky Mount Historical Association was established in 1958 to work toward the preservation of Rocky Mount as a state historic site to preserve the histories of early settlers of the western territory like William Cobb and Henry Massengill, and to teach about the Southwest Territory and its role in Tennessee's and our nation's history; and

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WHEREAS, the Rocky Mount Museum is currently the third most visited historic site in Tennessee, serving some 50,000 people annually from all 50 states and over 30 foreign countries and is recognized as a starred attraction by the American Automobile Association; and

WHEREAS, open year-round, Rocky Mount Museum presents the importance of the history of the development of Tennessee through first-person living history on a daily basis, and serves the traveling public as an introduction to the experience of the lifestyle and the thought processes of the many interesting people living in the mountainous Northeast Tennessee area; and

WHEREAS, Rocky Mount has received accreditation from the American Association of Museums, a status held by less than ten percent of the museums in the U.S. and only one of ten such museums so honored in Tennessee; and

WHEREAS, each year over eight thousand students from a three-state area participate in Rocky Mount Museum's educational programs, experiencing life in the region as it was in 1791; and

WHEREAS, since opening on April 1, 1962, approximately one-million people have visited this historic site; and

WHEREAS, if we do not embrace our history and learn from our past, we, as a people, are sacrificing the unity and common ground that our ancestors fought so hard to attain and preserve, and if we do not support the work of preservation and educational organizations like the Rocky Mount Historical Association we are in danger of losing this common heritage; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE ONE-HUNDREDTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES CONCURRING, That this General Assembly hereby pauses to commemorate the Thirty-Fifth Anniversary of the opening of Rocky Mount Museum as a state historic site, and its

achievements in educating children and adults concerning the cultural heritage of our state and nation.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation to the Rocky Mount Historical Association to commemorate this significant achievement in the organization's history, with this final clause omitted from such copy.